



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

#### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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#### BAKING OR PLANKING FISH OFFER HOMEMAKERS ADVANTAGES

Homemakers who are studying cook books these Lenten days for new ideas for preparing fish might do well to consider two old favorites -- baking and planking. Each method offers distinct advantages in serving and preparing that will appeal to the cook, the home economists of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service state.

In utilizing whole fish, as purchased at the market, the homemaker may find that baking offers the best method of preparing the fish. By baking the whole fish the full flavor of the fish is maintained, the cooking odors are minimized and the baking pan can be more easily cleaned.

Planking fish offers advantages of its own -- especially in its appeal to the family or guests. Planked fish not only tastes good, it looks good too. Served on a hardwood plank, surrounded by mash potatoes, vegetables and garnishes, the fish excites the appetite.

A stout, inch-thick plank of hickory, ash, or Appalachian oak serves best. If made by the local carpenter, the plank -- grooved about the edges to hold juices and oval in shape to fit a platter -- shouldn't cost more than a couple of dollars and will last for years. A tool-handly man-of-the-house might also take on the job of construction. Glass or metal baking dishes will serve almost as well, however.

The following recipes for baked or planked fish, developed and tested by Fish and Wildlife home economists in their test kitchen at College Park, Maryland, will bring excellent results.

#### Baked Stuffed Fish

3 or 4 pound fish, dressed  
1½ teaspoons salt  
Bread stuffing

4 tablespoons butter or  
other fat, melted  
3 slices of bacon (optional)

Clean, wash and dry the fish. Sprinkle inside and out with salt. Stuff fish loosely, and sew the opening with needle and string or close with skewers. Place fish in a greased baking pan. Brush with melted fat. Bake in a moderate oven 350° F. for 40 to 60 minutes or until fish flakes easily from the bone when tested with a fork. If fish seems dry while baking, baste occasionally with drippings or melted fat. Remove the string or skewers and serve immediately on a hot platter, plain or with a sauce. Serves 6.

### Bread Stuffing

3 tablespoons onions, chopped	1/8 teaspoon pepper
3/4 cup celery, chopped	1 teaspoon thyme, sage
6 tablespoons butter or	or savory seasoning
other fat, melted	4 cups day old bread crumbs
1 teaspoon salt	

Cook the celery and onions in the melted fat for about 10 minutes or until tender. Add the cooked vegetables and seasonings to the bread crumbs, and mix thoroughly. If dressing seems very dry, add 2 tablespoons water, milk or fish stock to moisten.

### Planked Fish

3 or 4 pound fish dressed	Seasoned mashed potatoes
1 1/2 teaspoons salt	Seasoned cook vegetables
1/8 teaspoon pepper	(peas, carrots, cauli-
4 tablespoons butter or other fat	flower, tomatoes or onions)

If hardwood plank is used, oil well and place in a cold oven and heat thoroughly as oven preheats.

Clean, wash and dry fish. Sprinkle inside and out with salt and pepper. Brush with melted fat. Place fish on the hot oiled plank or on a greased oven glass or metal platter. Bake in a moderate oven 400° F. for 35 to 45 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Remove from oven and quickly arrange a border of hot mashed potatoes around fish. Place in a preheated broiler until potatoes are slightly browned, about 5 minutes. Remove and arrange two or more hot vegetables around fish. Garnish with parsley and lemon or tomato wedges. Serve immediately on the plank. Serves 6.

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